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BY

LOUISE MARNY

SANTA BARBARA
CALIFORNIA

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I.

1

Love is not but a summer's day
  Of calm and sunny pleasure;
Not like a rose does it fade away,
  When it has breathed its treasure.

But rather like a steadfast star,
  Fixed in eternal spaces,
It sheds its radiance near and far
  And draws us through all earth's mazes.

2

WE YEARN FOR JOY

We yearn for joy,
  Yet joy is here.
We yearn for love,
  Yet love, so dear,
    Is you and I.

Lowly we stand,
  Beggars drear,
Outside the promised land;
  So far, so near.
    You and I.

Till hands we clasp
  And love unite;
And dare at last
  In joy abide.
    You and I.

3

SONG

Deep in my innermost heart and soul
  Stirs a breath of sheer delight,
Like a winged thing with heavenly goal,
  It soars—and I'm the tail of the kite.

Oh, it is surely within me, this song,
  And, oh, mine own it is quite;
Born in the rush of a warbling throng,
  It soars—and I'm the tail of the kite.

Go, then, and play in the spaces blue
  With other dear children of light!
For, in all of life you alone are true—
  And I'm but the tail of the kite.

4

ON THE WING OF MY DESIRE

On the wing of my desire
I have flown afar,
Over mountain top and spire,
Drawn by a distant star.

Soaring breathlessly
To dizzy height;
Counting neither strength nor distance,
For the flight seemed right.

And now, midway between earth and heaven
I hang trembling in the blue—
Silence reigns below where men are,
Silent is my star.

5

THE GOLD STARS ARE FADING

The gold stars are fading,
  The day is at dawn,
And joy is invading
  My heart, to you drawn.

Like bright stars beguiling
  The bleak midnight sky,
Your phantom lips smiling
  Sing woe's lullaby.

And vainly they're making
  Your absence so long—
In love ever waking,
  My heart hears your song.

6

SUNNY SQUARES

Sunny squares lie on the floor,
Mirrored by the window pane,
Or entering through the door.

Daily they stay there by me,
Seeking neither praise nor gain,
Like a familiar melody.

Or, like an unobtrusive friend,
Who long a habit became,
Accepted, proved and content.

Ah, me! what of the rainy day,
The day when the heart is in pain—
Will love then also gainsay?

7

ON THE WING

No, I'll not fail you, lone one.
For a love so tender, sweet,
Is the only prize I want,
Is the daily thing I need.
How could I fail you, lone one?
You who have learned to meet
My soaring heart on the wing,
You are my lover, indeed.

8

THE SILENT STARS

The silent stars are roaming
  The vast sweeps of the sky;
Myriads of distant strangers, they pass
  Like you and I.

Perhaps there are lovers among the stars!
  True lovers are shy—
And because they love so, stay remote,
  Like you and I.

LULLABY

My heart is but a nest of song,
For love is brooding there;
And the nestlings' voices all day long
Warble away my care.

Oh, little voices, who breathe of bliss,
How radiant you make the air!
You've taught me now what heaven is,
Oh, teach me also my joy to bear!

But soon you will flutter on tender wing
Into the world, wide and fair,
And then my heart itself must sing:
The nest must live and dare.

OH, FOR A SWEET LITTLE SONG!

Oh, for a sweet little song each day!
When the world seems tired and stale,
When the people grow old in sheer dismay
And the thread of their hope grows frail.

Do sing in our hearts, you God of Love,
Come, deliver us from our woe!
Answer! we have had sorrows enough,
And your silence does hurt us so!

Oh, for a sweet little song in the night!
When the heart in anguish wakes;
For a love-call to answer in deep delight,
For a day star—ere the morning breaks!

II.

11

TO A CHILD

Like a flower flown from its stem,
You flutter by with a smile;
Now floating airily,
Now tripping warily:
"You may chase me for a while,
But pray, don't pick me again!"

Like starlight twinkle your merry eyes,
So loving and yet so cool;
And thoughts play hide and seek in them,
Like goldfish in a pool.
Your innocence deep wisdom is,
Sweet faith your power divine.

TO MOTHER

My lover has left me, mother dear;
  Left me, again and again.
But he kissed me, ere he left, dear,
  So he'll come again and again.

As the bird coos with his mate, dear,
  So speaks my lover with me,
And then he leaves as the bird takes his flight
  To come again and again.

Some day he'll bid me come, dear,
  To fly with him over the main,
But first he must come back, dear,
  Come back again and again.

13

FRIENDSHIP

Thank me not, sweet friend!
  How could I do less but love you
And cherish you to the end?
  You, who are life's dear bloom!

Could I do aught but render
  What love has given me?
And to you, immortal spender,
  Give your own, joyfully!

14

TO THE BIRDMAN

In the rushing flight of the bird
  You have joined unafraid;
Jubilantly flown from the herd,
  In heaven your eyes have strayed.

Oh, winged man, how you do
  Lift heart and courage skyward.
With the wing of the bird you flew
  And with your vision we push onward.

But birdman, have you no lute?
  What of the joy you have known?
Will now your lips stay mute,
  Since through the spaces you've flown?

Come, sing us the songs of the blue,
  From the lilting rippling merry lay
Rise, oh winged man, anew,
  To the mighty love song of our day.

15

THE BEGGAR

I saw him begging for a little love,
Even as we all beg at some heart's door,
For love, or pity?
Nay, its love he wanted,
And she flung him from her over and over.

She ran abreast with merriment,
Straight into life's depth—
And perished there, still scorning him—
For he was but a beggar
And knew not how to win.

THE WOMAN

I am only a woman and my deeds are few,
Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew—
In it are stored all the ages past
And the germs of the worlds, which did not last;
The kings' highway, where the proud went by
And the desert, where men's bones do dry,
And felines, prowling for their prey,
And dark forebodings, which tongue can't say.

I am only a woman and my deeds are few,
Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew—
In it are stored all the ages past
And the dark deeds of men, which cannot last.
I know them all and I know them well,
And through them I've grown past heaven and hell.
But I veil my knowledge—as I veil my face—
And smile upon you with fateful grace.
I am the hunter, you are the game;
But I am the wild thing and you are tame.

I am the fire, that burns in your breast;
Of your feverish dream I am the guest.
I am your hope in the race to come;
Give me my way and I'll leave you some!
I am a scourge, that lives on blood,
And seek those first, whose heart is good.
Life's portal am I to the young,
I am your funeral dirge unsung.

I am only a woman and my deeds are few;
Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew!
In it are stored all the ages past,
And the ties of the world, which did not last.
But let love touch me with its secret springs
And goodness unfolds me with angels' wings.
Forgotten the past and the scores to pay;
I am conscious only of love's sweet way.
The desert's abloom and gay with springs,
The air mysterious with flying things;
The birds are setting the dawn athrill,
My heart is a garden, sunny and still.

I am only a woman and my deeds are few,
Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew!
I love you because you are big and strong;
I love you whether you're right or wrong.
You are my joy and you are my pride!
Not for a kingdom would I leave your side.
But when you're ill and poor, I love you best;
In deepest devotion, most deeply blessed.
I love you so, because love I must,
Through and beyond this earthly dust.

I am only a woman and my deeds are few,
Yet, my heart is so vast—if you but knew!
In it are stored all the loves of the past,
But my love for you showed me God at last.

17

ECHO

Yes, I am calling you, Holy One,
I am calling—I want to go home—
Over rocky roads, through the world aflame,
I will come, I will come, I will come!

But no, it is you who are calling to me—
My voice but your echo faint;
My longing is your divine decree,
My sorrow your love's complaint.

Oh, weary road through the wilderness,
How vain your roughness, your merciless sun.
Love is our way—and in tenderness
God has come, He has come, He has come!

JUST FOR FUN

Never mind the daily bothers,
  Life has but begun;
Let them daunt and worry others,
  Win out just for fun!

Never mind the fast-closed portals,
  Work has but begun;
It's the sesame of mortals,
  Win out just for fun!

Never mind the failing pleasures,
  Love has but begun;
Give it out in heaping measures,
  Win out just for fun!

19

DETERMINATION

Try not to taunt me, fear,
  I will have none of thee.
Life is ever dear
  And sweet to me.
I will cling to my dream
  Of love and sympathy,
Until fond things that seem
  Are made to be.

20

VOLPLANING

Come, let's you and I be happy,
  Fellow man;
While the days are full and snappy,
  Work and plan
To ascend on our best knowing,
  Span for span.
Reap in full our ample sowing,
  For we can
Seek our level 'mongst the stars,
  Fellow man,
Forge ahead, leap o'er the bars
  In the van.
Walk the waves of men's dissension,
  Watch and scan,
And expand to full dimension,
  Fellow man.

THE USELESS WARNING

Merrily the drops are falling
  In the regions of the sky;
And the little bugs are crawling
  To their shelter, far and nigh.

I alone am out to weather
  Rain and sleet and dreary storm,
And I'm wishing all together
  For a life in different form.

No, I see two lovers drifting
  Ignorantly toward the lake!
Do they think the clouds are lifting?
  And the sun's about to break?

Though most things occur in season,
  Lovers happen unawares;
Come and go, devoid of reason,
  Blithely stumbling into snares.

Their indifference is appalling
  To one as timely as a clock;
The barometer is falling
  And I am the weather-cock.

III.

22

THE ISLAND

Lonely one, lovely one,
How dare you dwell so serene,
Midst rushing, roaring waters,
Above chasms where strength slaughters
The weaker one and the little one?
Who holds you fast between
The shifting sky and the moving sea?

Lonely one, lovely one,
How dare you dwell so serene?
Never refuse your flower-wreathed breast
To the hungry waters' furtive quest?
Whence is your wealth unseen?
Will you evermore spend your loveliness,
Lonely one in the sea?

Lonely one, lovely one,
How dare you dwell so serene,
While gently waving your welcome
With garlands green to me—
When my heart's a-thrill with your mystery
And my hungry eyes are roving and keen?
Do you know love, alone in the sea?

NOCTURNE

The evening fell,
  The sea looked cold,
With furious spell
  The winds made bold.

The fowls screeched,
  The sea appalled,
Lashed the grey beach,
  By fear enthralled.

And lo! a bird,
  Dragging his wing,
Before me stirred,
  Mute in the din.

The evening fell,
  The sea looked cold,
With furious spell
  The winds made bold.

My hand outstretched,
I beckoned him,
Poor little wretch
With broken wing.

In dread of me
He reeled around,
His aching body
Dragged the ground.

How could he know
That I meant well?
The gale swept low,
The evening fell.

Away he strained,
Till I, in pity,
Had refrained
From helping him.

MESSENGERS?

Pinioned wanderers of the blue,
  Whither are you wending?
Soaring blithely through
  Spaces deep, unending?

Twittering all the merry way,
  While frail wings are plying.
And we bear our wistful day,
  Struggling, longing, sighing:

For a bird's own winged heart,
  For a bird-throat—singing—
Strength to leave the human mart,
  Upward, upward winging.

NORTHERN AUTUMN

Red and golden glory
  Shines across the lake.
Flaunting autumn story,
  Winter's in your wake.

Anxious premonition,
  Beloved, somber sight,
Lurid admonition,
  Death-tale, are you right?

Do we flaunt life's banners,
  Act our roundelay—
Like foolish caravaners—
  Are we time's prey?

Or, are we life's promise,
  A love song, not yet sung?
With wells of joy within us,
  Hearts ever young?

26

THEY MURMUR AND BREATHE OF LOVE

Night has kissed the lone island;
With darkness she clasps it about:
"Mute shall you be and silent!"
And she spreads her dusky shroud.

But vaguely the winds are stirring,
Gently the wavelets lap;
And fearless wings are whirring,
In tall trees whispers the sap.

They feel not the night's dull creeping,
Their faces gaze ever above;
While we in oblivion are sleeping,
They murmer and breathe of love.

27

BUTTERFLIES

Dainty whisp of fancy,
  Blue-winged butterfly;
Like a heavenly pansy,
  Fluttering from the sky.

Blue-frocked, sweet-lipped Nancy—
  Heaven-born butterfly—
Is it hard to fancy
  Life just you and I?

SWEET PEAS

Merrily your tendrils spin
  Spring-tales 'round my bowl;
And with tender hands do cling
  To the artist's scroll.

And your faces gaze about,
  Childlike in their wonder;
Cheek to cheek a rosy cloud,
  On my table yonder.

Round about you all did fade
  In oblivion, when you came,
Casts and bronze and paint and jade,
  With the artist's fame.

And your sweet and fragrant soul
  Evermore is rising,
Gladsome, sacrificial toll,
  Men to joy enticing.

IV.

AMERICA

As a goddess,
Young and joyous;
Rich and careless,
Strong and glorious.

As a mother,
Sweet and tender,
In love's splendor,
Giving, spending,
Nursing, tending.

As a priestess,
Burning,
Yearning:
Help, O God, this world to bless!

30

FRANCE RENASCENT

Only my eyes are weeping,
  For my soul does sing.
And in this dying body leaping,
  Is joy, vibrant like spring.
Radiant in glorious effulgence—
  Immanence of a great dawn—
She speaks in loving indulgence,
  And I to the World-Heart am drawn;
And in hungry rapture thrill
  To the call repeated gently:
"Answer, child, it is His will,
  For in joy God speaks to thee!"

31

HEIGHT AND DEPTH

Pinioned with joy we soar,
  The earth above;
Glorified evermore,
  Centered in love.

But by men's woe we're torn
  From heaven above,
To weep with them who mourn,
  Centered in love.

EVOLUTION

Men, like mobile whisps of straw,
  Are moved by the breezes' will;
Fearful they are and held in awe,
  By phantoms, boding ill.

Weakened by cares and sorrow,
  The edge of their thought is dull;
Uncertain of the morrow,
  Their daily doom they cull.

Strange, that we, heirs to the promise
  Of dominion and kingdom and love,
Should take such burdens upon us,
  Should not have vision enough.

To free ourselves from evil,
  Which lurks in the depth of the soul,
And know that beneath the upheaval,
  Is the truth that leavens the whole.

The only great revolution,
  Applies to ill-will the rod;
And in bond with divine evolution,
  Makes man in the image of God.

THE FITFUL MUSIC

The fitful music of the crowd
Rises, sharp and loud.
Who knows the end of the song—
How far, how long?

An orchestra of passion aflame,
Of delusion, anger and pain.
Who knows the end of the song —
How far, how long?

So does the sea arise,
Roaring fierce mutinies.
Who knows the end of the song—
How far, how long?

Is there a leader whose might,
Tunes maddening chaos aright,
Who knows the end of the song—
How far, how long?

34

INSTINCT

You are urging me again:
"Arouse and take your share
Of life's fulness!"
And I, half tempted, rise,
And look about me:
Everywhere they are,
Who harvest from the earth
Gold, fame, success in love—
Their horn of plenty is ever full
And their lips are satiated
With the draft of life;
Their eyes strained
With discontent and hunger.
And humbly I thank the great Father,
For He does replenish my heart.

SILENCE ANSWERS PRAYER AND QUEST

The days are throbbing with rumors of strife.
  Hither and thither men run
On errands of death and on errands of life;
  Whose command do they heed; whose command do they shun?

The troubled face of the earth is in pain.
  Does she fathom her children's plight?
She cradles the weary, she cradles the slain,
  But she knows not wrong nor right.

And the stars multitude serenely gaze
  On the joy and the torture of wicked and brave.
If they knew life's tortuous maze,
  Would they draw close and save?

Silence answers prayer and quest.
  The seasons ebb and flow.
Comes spring with its joys and winter's rest,
  The flowers bloom and the breezes blow.

The only clamour is in our heart,
  Where the eternal judge does preside:
We have betrayed—since love is our part—
  The Just One we have defied.

DEMOCRACY

One in heart and one in purpose,
  Sons of the vast I Am;
Eager to break through the surface,
  Able to stand as a man.

Free are we, knowing the truth
  Stronger than lusts of flesh;
Washed in the blood of our youth,
  Clothed in divine love afresh.

The easiest way has vanished
  Beneath the dead of the past;
And with soul and spirit famished
  We tread straight roads at last.

Hand in hand, as brothers well might,
  Singing and jubilant.
One body now, one light—
  The vision of the vast I Am.

37

FREELY GIVE

Freely give, for freely ye receive.
Do not treat your fellow
As though he were a thief.
Who sends to the sun his wages,
Or thanks the birds for song?
Yet, they shine and sing through the ages.

Freely give, for freely ye receive.
Give the song of your heart
Or your heart it will leave—
Give the gold from the mart,
Give the work of your hand:
We may trust—till we can understand!

Freely give, for freely ye receive
Love's fulness, which few men dare conceive,
Though ever the ebb and flow of life,
Eternal, rising in harmony—
Because there is no strife
In love's own, vast reality.

38

THE USELESS THINGS

It is useless to shun the day,
For the night will go and the sun will stay.
It is useless to grudge and groan,
For we must give before we own.
It is useless to flatter and steal,
For our own eyes the lie reveal.
It is useless to wait and tarry,
For with us always our burden we carry.
It is useless to hate and resent,
For we must love, or else repent.

RECONSTRUCTION

Deep down in our hearts
Works the eternal cause,
And silently it welds together
Our destinies.

We pick and choose
Like foolish children,
We tread the easiest way,
Thinking to beat a flowery path in life.
We deck ourselves with tinsel
And wreathe our brow
With laurels of achievement
And the eternal cause works on
In our heart
And with our heartbeats
Sings the swan song
Of all we have held dear.
As a death clock ticks
In the frustrated wood,
That was born a living tree
And made into a foolish thing—
Day and night we listen, frightened,
To the dirge—

Listen and try not to hear
And magnify the sound with our fear
And our bulwarks fall
As if by magic;
And our earthly strongholds crumble
As if some giant hand
Had sport with them.

And we begin to pray
To the Unknown Power
—The secret Cause in our heart—
And in despair surrender utterly to our God
And cry, enlightened:
"I can of myself do nothing,
Thy will be done, use me, oh Lord!"

And suddenly our faith
Changes that funeral dirge
Into a hymn of love,
And in our heartbeats
We hear now the calling of the Father
To His wayward child,
And our thoughts rise up to Him
And with Him are at peace.

WHAT IS THE MEANING?

What is the meaning of this little life,
  Whence did I come, whither to go?
Must I grow strong through battle and strife,
  Learn to be happy through suffering woe?

Was it by a stupid call of the blood,
  Through a night's keen, fateful revel?
Did I descend from pure heights and good,
  Or rise from life's lower level?

Why am I here for a little while,
  Born in anguish and living in pain?
Why is my heart torn between love and guile
  And my soul's fond longing vain?

Who did rear these fleshly walls
  For me to struggle within?
With a pagan love for the joy that calls
  And a flame in my breast to purge me of sin?

Till the heart it scorches and the flesh it sears
And melts the marrow of my very bones
And makes my bosom a caldron of tears
And turns my joys into stones.

All about me it heaps ashes and dust;
But it burns and points above,
Until I know by it's light, that I must
Learn to feed that flame with love.

So then, I fathom that flame to be life,
Since it burns through the death of the rest!
I will to obey, and thus end the strife:
Love's flames enfolding me answer the quest.

V.

41

HOME

A bird,
A flower
And laughter;
Maybe a roof on the rafter,
Love's candle bright and stout
And kindly thoughts about.

42

MARRIAGE

The enchantment of two lives:
Beauty and strength,
Joy and pain—
Surrender in conquest,
Freedom in surrender.

LOVE

Wonderful bounty,
Mine from your hand;
Ever does haunt me,
Fill and enchant.
Well of deep sympathy,
Mountain of light,
Armor and strength to me,
Joy and delight.

JOY

Dancing,
Prancing,
All entrancing,
Life enhancing,
Ever advancing;
Ringing,
Singing,
Upward winging,
Fragrant,
Vibrant,
Toward the light.

LAUGHTER

Lilting,
Rippling,
Reveling round,
Only the happy moments count.
Sparkling,
Bubbling,
Merry glee:
Come now and be happy with me.

46

SPRING

Branch a-twitter,
Rustling titter,
Fairy glitter;
Spring is here.

47

PRAYER

Lisping, stammering
Words of love;
Weeping, clamoring,
Hear us above!

48

GOD

Beauty and life to me,
Depth of love's sympathy,
Joy your divine decree,
Ever adorable
Tender and kind.

49

MANKIND

Daring to serve and help,
Trusting in truth and love,
Conquering in joy and pain,
Glorying throughout.

50

OUR DAILY BREAD

Give us a little beauty,
Some joy mixed with our duty;
Dry humor without gall
And love, dear God, for all.

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